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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

Assassination as a Tool of Political Control

Who really did kill Kennedy?

David Talbot, founder of Salon.com ... believes that new evidence, including his own research encompassing more than 150 interviews, further undermines the conclusions of the Warren Commission Report. [His new book] *Brothers* ... stresses the extent to which the Kennedy administration faced political pressure from the extreme right, including elements of the CIA leadership, the national security apparatus [and] anti-Castro Cubans. JFK incurred the wrath of his enemies and incubated a desire for revenge in many of them. The author will convince many ... that the likelihood of a conspiracy to assassinate JFK (and maybe RFK) is significant. Talbot's highly readable, at times gripping book makes the case for releasing the classified documents pertaining to the JFK assassination. Declassified JFK files reveal that in 1963, [CIA agent George] Joannides was the agent in charge of one of the most powerful Cuban anti-Castro organizations in Miami, the Revolutionary Students Directorate, or DRE. A few months before JFK's assassination, the DRE had significant contact with Lee Harvey Oswald. In the course of four intensive investigations of the JFK assassination, however, the CIA failed to divulge information about this connection, or even that Joannides was the CIA officer assigned to manage the DRE, and refused to release important parts of Joannides' personnel file. In September, on grounds of national security, the CIA successfully thwarted a request for such information. Until it is released, many ... will reasonably speculate that crucial information about the JFK assassination

is being concealed. -- San Francisco Chronicle, May 15, 2007

Note: The History Channel's documentary *The Men Who Killed Kennedy* (1988) shows beyond doubt that there was more than one gunman.

* * *

Was Robert Kennedy killed by a real "Manchurian candidate"-style assassin?

The circumstances surrounding the assassination of Robert Kennedy are being resurrected and re-examined in an attempt to establish the truth of what happened that night in the cramped pantry of a Los Angeles hotel. New evidence has emerged [in] the case of Sirhan Sirhan, who was convicted of the assassination. Celebrities and journalists are joining the campaign for a federal investigation, which has been sparked in part by a new book, *Nemesis*, by the British author Peter Evans. Evans, who spent 10 years researching the book, has unearthed evidence to support Sirhan's contention that he was hypnotised into being the "fall guy" for the murder. Evans identifies the hypnotist, who had worked on CIA mind control programmes and who was later found dead in mysterious circumstances. Bullet holes in the walls and ceiling demonstrate conclusively that more than one gunman fired shots at Senator Kennedy. Both Evans and Sirhan's lawyer, Larry Teeter, are convinced that the Palestinian activist was chosen to be a Manchurian Candidate-style assassin. The assassination, they say, was carried out by a professional hitman who fled immediately, leaving Sirhan to take the blame. Teeter ... said: "I know it was done. It was consistent with the US government's programme developed by the CIA and Military Intelligence to enable handlers to get people to commit

crimes with no knowledge of what they are doing." Evans goes further and names the hypnotist as a Dr William Joseph Bryan Jnr. He had worked on a CIA mind-control programme called MKULTRA. Dr Bryan was found dead in a Las Vegas hotel room in 1978. He had either shot himself or was murdered. The case remains unsolved. -- The Independent, (UK leading newspaper) Jan. 18, 2005

* * *

Martin Luther King shooting tapes released online

Thirty-eight years after he was assassinated on a motel balcony, photographs, recordings and police files that describe the death of Martin Luther King Jr. have been placed on the internet. On yesterday's anniversary of Dr King's death, the Shelby County Register's office in Memphis, Tennessee, made available hours of tapes, including hurried police calls from the scene of the crime, hundreds of photographs and thousands of pages of files and transcripts of the trial of James Earl Ray, the man found guilty of the shooting. Dr King was ... in the city, and under police surveillance, trying to lead a peaceful protest of sanitation workers. The subsequent hour of calls, edited to 18 minutes on the website, show the rapid pace of events that later became the US Government's case against Ray, who first admitted shooting Dr King before recanting and insisting for the rest of his life, with the support of the King family, that he was framed for the crime. Ray ... died in jail in 1998 after four investigations, including a review by the Department of Justice, failed to find evidence to support a theory that Dr King was shot on the orders of a Memphis bar-owner.

-- London Times, April 5, 2006

Note: This article fails to mention that at a 1999 court trial held in Memphis, the family of Rev. King accused elements of the U.S. government of complicity in King's death. After one month of hearings from 70 witnesses, a jury composed of six white and six black jurors took only one hour to find the U.S. government, the state of Tennessee, the city of Memphis, the Memphis police, and several individuals guilty of murdering King. Yet the mainstream media completely boycotted this trial. Thankfully, CBC (Canada's PBS) gave it some coverage. To see a CBC clip of this highly revealing trial, go to minute 19 of the eye-opening video at http://911busters.com/911_new_video_productinos/WNV/9-11_Perspectives.wmv.

Ed.: though these unresolved crimes against prominent people occurred more than 30 years ago the government has not been idle, having in the meantime killed lesser "enemies of the state", such as MOVE members, Vickie Weaver and the Branch Davidians. Hopefully government agents will not resume their wayward ways during the 2008 presidential election cycle.

Lafayette: Forgotten Hero

By Richard Pyle

While hundreds of American counties, cities, squares, streets and schools bear the name Lafayette, how many people today could identify the Revolutionary War hero?

"Not many," says Richard Rabinowitz, curator of a new exhibit on the Frenchman at the New-York Historical Society. "The American Revolution has ceased to be a story that we tell in our popular culture."

Lafayette's pivotal role in history is compelling: The young nobleman volunteered to fight in the American Revolution, became George Washington's surrogate son and a general at age 19, and survived a battlefield wound to play a key role in the final victory over the British at Yorktown.

Marie Jean Paul Joseph Roche Yves Gilbert du Motier Lafayette was widely described as "the greatest man in the world" during a triumphant return 40 years later to the country he had helped create.

On that 1824-25 trip, "he confirmed the deepest beliefs that Americans had about themselves, a national identity of America as an

exceptional nation," said Lloyd Kramer, a historian and author of the biography *Lafayette in Two Worlds*.

The Historical Society exhibit, marking Lafayette's 250th birthday runs through Aug. 10, 2008. It focuses on the 13-month victory lap that took Lafayette, then 67 and the last surviving general of the American Revolution, to all 24 states and as far west as St. Louis.

The exhibit's tours de force are an original wicker-basket carriage that Lafayette rode between stops in Vermont. There is also a chilling replica of the French Revolution guillotine that Lafayette, as a French nobleman, escaped by attempting to flee back to America; but he was arrested by Prussia in 1792 and imprisoned in Austria until 1797.

When he arrived in New York in July 1824, Lafayette was cheered by 50,000 people on a parade. That began his 13 months of travel by steamboat, stagecoach, carriage, horseback and sailing ship, covering 6,000 miles of rugged country, primitive conditions and often ghastly food.

Lafayette visited Thomas Jefferson at Monticello, sat for portraits by Rembrandt Peale and Samuel F.B. Morse (who later invented the telegraph), and saw American democracy at work—the bitterly contested 1824 election in which John Quincy Adams' victory over Andrew Jackson was decided in the House of Representatives.

Ten thousand people turned out at Yorktown as he walked the field where the British had surrendered in 1781 and sat in Washington's original command tent, brought out of storage for the occasion.

Although deeply offended by slavery, he diplomatically avoided getting into American politics and shied away from abolitionists. However, he went out of his way to greet blacks, making the point that many had served heroically in the Revolution. By tipping his hat to Lewis Hayden in Lexington, Ky., he inspired the 13-year-old slave to become an anti-slavery firebrand in adult life.

Poet Walt Whitman claimed that at age 5, he was scooped up and kissed on the cheek by Lafayette during a stop in Brooklyn.

After an emotional farewell speech by Adams, Lafayette returned home aboard an American warship, the USS *Brandywine*, built for his trip and named for the Revolutionary battle

where he was wounded.

Having expressed a desire to be buried in American soil, he took with him some dirt from Boston's Bunker Hill, which was put into his grave when he died of pneumonia in Paris in 1834.

-- AP, November 17, 2007

The Clash

Ed.: we transcribed this interview from an Al-Jazeera TV program broadcast from Qatar February 21, 2006. Wafa Sultan, a female Arab-American, is a psychologist living in California.

Sultan: The clash we are witnessing around the world is not a clash of religions, or a clash of civilizations. It is a clash between two opposites, between two eras. It is a clash between a mentality that belongs to the Middle Ages and another mentality that belongs to the Twenty-first Century. It is a clash between civilization and backwardness, between the civilized and the primitive, between barbarity and rationality. It is a clash between freedom and oppression, between democracy and dictatorship. It is a clash between human rights, on the one hand, and the violations of those rights, on the other hand. It is a clash between those who treat women like beasts and those who treat them like human beings. What we see today is not a clash of civilizations. Civilizations do not clash but compete.

First panelist: I understand from your words that what is happening today is a clash between the culture of the West, and the backwardness and ignorance of the Muslim?

Sultan: Yes, that is what I mean.

First panelist: Who came up with the concept of a clash of civilizations? Was it not Samuel Huntington? It was not Bin Laden. I would like to discuss this issue, if you don't mind.

Sultan: The Muslims are the ones who began using this expression. The Muslims are the ones who began a clash of civilizations. The Prophet of Islam said: "I was ordered to fight the people until they believe in Allah and his messenger." When the Muslims divided the people into Muslims and non-Muslims and called to fight the others until they believe in what they themselves believe, they started this clash and began this war. In order to stop this war they must examine their Islamic books and curricula which are full of calls for takfir and fighting the

In the beginning of change the patriot is a scarce man, brave, hated and scorned. When his cause succeeds, however, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot. – Mark Twain

infidels. My colleague has said that he never offends other people's beliefs. What civilization on the face of this earth allows him to call people by names they did not choose for themselves? Once he calls them Ahl Al-Dhimma, another time he calls them the "People of the Book," and yet another time he compares them to apes and pigs or calls the Christians "those who incur Allah's wrath." Who told you they are "People of the Book"? They are not the People of the Book, they are people of many books. All the useful scientific books that you have today are theirs, the fruit of their free and creative thinking. What gives you the right to call them "those who incur Allah's wrath", or "those who have gone astray" and then come here and say your religion commands you to refrain from offending he beliefs of others? I am not a Christian, a Muslim or a Jew. I am a secular human being. I do not believe in the supernatural, but I respect others' right to believe in it.

Second panelist: Are you a heretic?

Sultan: You can say whatever you like. I am a secular human being who does not believe in the supernatural...

Second panelist (with upraised fists): If you are a heretic, there is no point in rebuking you since you have blasphemed against Islam, the Prophet, and the Koran...

Sultan: These are personal matters that do not concern you. Brother, you can believe in stones, as long as you don't throw them at me. You are free to worship whoever you want, but other peoples' beliefs are not your concern, whether they believe that the Messiah is God, son of Mary, or that Satan is God, son of Mary. Let people have their beliefs.

-- Mimri TV Production

Islamic Law

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia- The Saudi judiciary on Tuesday defended a court verdict that sentenced a 19-year-old victim of a gang rape to six months in jail and 200 lashes because she was with an unrelated male when they were attacked.

Justice in Saudi Arabia is administered by a system of religious courts according to the kingdom's strict interpretation of Islamic law. Judges have wide discretion in punishing criminals, rules of evidence are vague and sometimes no defense lawyer is present.

-- AP, November 20, 2007

Ed.: Islamic law, or Sharia law, apparently has no notion of justice.

Islamists, of course, seeks to establish sharia throughout the world.

U.S. Law

Pennsylvania Police Commissioner Miller and the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association support Governor Rendell's proposed ban on AR-15 H-BAR target rifles and CAR-15 type carbines.

-- Allegheny County Sportsmen's League, Nov. 20, 2007

Ed.: As Islamists wants to impose sharia law (see preceding article) some U.S. politicians and police are undermining U.S. law (the constitution). Which leads us to appreciate anew the wisdom of the founders -- never give up your guns. Might we need them someday, to struggle against Islamic judicial injustice and police domestic lawlessness?

"The Weak Slat under the Bed of Democracy"

By Michael Winship

Recently New York Times Magazine Editor Gerald Marzorati and reporter Deborah Solomon admitted Solomon had from time to time rewritten questions published in her magazine interviews after the interview took place or inserted new ones "retroactively" to better match an answer.

We in the media too often have surrendered our responsibility to tell the truth squarely and give the public what it needs to know. A free republic depends on journalism, but too often, as the great reporter A.J. Liebling once said, the press is "the weak slat under the bed of democracy."

Monday's New York Times reported a study on coverage of domestic political news during the first half of this year, conducted by the Project for Excellence in Journalism, the Pew Research Center and the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School.

The study found that two-thirds of all political stories, in print, on-line, and via TV and radio, concentrated on the campaign horse races but only one percent examined candidates' public records. The Times noted, "Only 12 percent of stories seemed relevant to voters' decision making; the rest were more about tactics and strategy ...

"The campaign coverage has been sharply at odds with what the public says it wants, the study found, with voters eager to know more about the candidates' positions on issues and their personal backgrounds, more about

lesser-known candidates and more about debates."

The late Walter Lippmann - the ultimate Washington inside reporter - famously described journalism as the last refuge of the vaguely talented. In his 1920 book, *Liberty and the News*, Lippman wrote, "In an exact sense the present crisis of western democracy is a crisis of journalism.... Everywhere today, men are conscious that somehow they must deal with questions more intricate than any that church or school had prepared them to understand. Increasingly they know that they cannot understand them if the facts are not quickly and steadily available ...

"All that the sharpest critics of democracy have alleged is true, if there is no steady supply of trustworthy and relevant news. Incompetence and aimlessness, corruption and disloyalty, panic and ultimate disaster, must come to any people which is denied an assured access to the facts."

We've been denied too long. The results are painfully clear to see.

-- truthoutPerspective, Nov. 2, 2007

FBI's Forensic Test Full of Holes

As many as 2500 prisoners have been convicted with the help of an FBI forensic tool that was discarded more than two years ago. But the FBI has yet to take steps to alert the affected defendants or courts.

The science, known as comparative bullet-lead analysis, was first used after President Kennedy's assassination in 1963. The technique used chemistry to link crime-scene bullets to ones possessed by suspects on the theory that each batch of lead had a unique elemental makeup.

In 2004, however, the nation's most prestigious scientific body, the National Academy of Sciences, said that decades of FBI statements to jurors linking a particular bullet to those found in a suspect's gun or cartridge box were so overstated that such testimony should be considered "misleading under federal rules of evidence."

Though the FBI abandoned the analysis in 2005 it has never gone back to determine how many times its scientists misled jurors. Internal memos show that the bureau's managers were aware by 2004 that testimony had been overstated in a large number of trials. In a smaller number of cases, the experts had made false matches based on a faulty statistical analysis of the elements contained in different lead samples.

The bureau told defense lawyers in a general letter dated Sept. 1,

2005, that although it was ending the technique, it "still firmly supports the scientific foundation of bullet lead analysis." And in at least two cases, the bureau has tried to help state prosecutors defend past convictions by using court filings that experts say are still misleading.

For the majority of affected prisoners, the typical two-to-four-year window to appeal their convictions based on new scientific evidence is closing.

The FBI's concerns about the science dated to 1991 and came to light only because a former FBI lab scientist began challenging it.

In response to the information uncovered by *The Post* and "60 Minutes," the FBI late last week said it would initiate corrective actions including a nationwide review of all bullet-lead testimonies and notification to prosecutors so that the courts and defendants can be alerted.

The past inaction on bullet-lead contrasts with the last time the FBI's science was called into question, in the mid-1990s, when 13 lab employees were accused of shoddy work and of giving overstated testimony involving several disciplines, including explosives as well as hair and fiber analysis. Back then, the Justice Department reviewed hundreds of cases in which FBI experts testified, and it notified prisoners about problems that affected their convictions. The government did so because prosecutors have a legal obligation to turn over evidence that could help defendants prove their innocence.

Even the harshest critics concede that the FBI correctly measured the chemical elements of lead bullets. But the science academy found that the lab used faulty statistical calculations to declare that bullets matched. FBI witnesses also overstated the significance of the matches.

Since 2005, the nonpartisan Forensic Justice Project, run by former FBI lab whistle-blower Frederic Whitehurst, has tried to force the bureau to release a list of bullet-lead cases under the Freedom of Information Act. But the government has stalled, among other things seeking \$70,000 to search for the documents.

In the mid-1990s, the FBI used the science to help prove that Clinton White House lawyer Vincent W. Foster committed suicide, internal FBI documents show.

In the early days, bullet fragments were subjected to neutron beams that would allow scientists to measure the presence and amounts of at least three chemical elements:

antimony, arsenic and copper. If two bullets had similar measurements of those three elements - the FBI allowed for a small margin of error - they were declared a match.

In 1996, the bureau switched to a new method called "inductively coupled plasma optical emission spectroscopy," in which scientists identified and measured seven trace elements in the bullets, adding the elements bismuth, cadmium, tin and silver. The goal was to increase the precision of the tests. But at the same time that it was measuring more elements, the FBI doubled the margin of error for declaring matches.

"Not enough suspects were being caught in the new net using seven elements, so they chose to use a bigger net," said Clifford Spiegelman, a statistician at Texas A&M University who reviewed the FBI's statistical methods for the science academy.

-- *Washington Post*, November 18, 2007

Jersey's Cities Ranked Most Dangerous, Safest

The 14th annual "City Crime Rankings: Crime in Metropolitan America" was released by CQ Press. It is based on the FBI's Sept. 24 crime statistics report.

The report looked at 378 cities with at least 75,000 people based on per-capita rates for homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary and auto theft. Each crime category was considered separately and weighted based on its seriousness.

Detroit was declared the most dangerous U.S. city. Last year's crime leader, St. Louis, fell to No. 2. Flint, Mich. ranked third, followed by Oakland Calif.; **Camden, N.J.**; Birmingham, Ala.; North Charleston, S.C.; Memphis, Tenn.; Richmond, Calif.; and Cleveland.

The study ranked Mission Viejo, Calif., as the safest U.S. city, followed by Clarkstown, N.Y.; **Brick Township, N.J.**; Amherst, N.Y.; and Sugar Land, Texas.

The study assigns a crime score to each city, with zero representing the national average. Detroit got a score of 407, while St. Louis followed at 406. The score for Mission Viejo, in affluent Orange County, was minus 82.

The study excluded Illinois and Minnesota cities because of incomplete data.

-- AP, November 18, 2007

"We don't read most of the bills."

By Robert Parry

In a memorable scene from Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11," Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) explains how it was that Congress passed the USA Patriot Act without knowing many of its provisions. "Sit down, my son," the courtly politician said. "We don't read most of the bills."

That reality does not appear to have changed much. In 2006 Congress rushed through the Military Commissions Act.

Now, the Senate is expected to consider legislation scrapping one part of the law, its denial of habeas corpus - the ancient protection against arbitrary arrests - to foreigners whom Bush has designated "unlawful enemy combatants."

The *New York Times* on Sept. 17 praised this effort to "reverse one of the worst aspects of the 2006 law" that "established military tribunals to try any foreigner that Mr. Bush labels an illegal combatant." But the *Times* editors - like many members of Congress - don't appear to have read the law through to the end.

If they had, they would know that the Military Commissions Act creates a parallel legal system not limited to foreigners. The law could put "any person," including those "in breach of an allegiance or duty to the United States" before a military tribunal if the person "knowingly and intentionally aids an enemy of the United States."

Who has "an allegiance or duty to the United States" if not an American citizen? That provision would not presumably apply to Osama bin Laden or al-Qaeda, nor would it apply generally to foreigners.

It appears the goal of these "any person" provisions is to allow for the detention of perceived "fifth columnists" or other domestic enemies of the state at a time of crisis, such as during some future terrorist incident.

Though it's true the Military Commissions Act specifically strips non-U.S. citizens of habeas corpus, the law implicitly denies everyone who gets swept into Bush's new legal system the opportunity to challenge their incarceration.

The law states that once a person is detained, "no court, justice, or judge shall have jurisdiction to hear or consider any claim or cause of action whatsoever ... relating to the prosecution, trial, or judgment of a military commission under this chapter,

including challenges to the lawfulness of procedures of military commissions."

That court-stripping provision - barring "any claim or cause of action whatsoever" - would seem to deny detainees a wide variety of constitutional rights - such as a speedy trial, the right to reasonable bail and the ban on "cruel and unusual punishment." If a person can't file a motion with a court, constitutional rights can't be asserted.

Under the 2006 law, the military judge "may close to the public all or a portion of the proceedings" if he deems that the evidence must be kept secret for national security reasons.

The most prominent bill, sponsored by Sens. Patrick Leahy, (D-VT), and Arlen Specter, (R-PA), limits itself to deleting the Military Commissions Act's specific denial of habeas corpus rights to non-U.S. citizens.

But the Leahy-Specter bill would leave in place Bush's unprecedented parallel legal system that now resides outside the American constitutional structure.

-- Consortium News, Sept. 18, 2007

Guns on Campus

Utah is the only state where students are not explicitly prohibited from bringing guns onto campus. But in the wake of the Virginia Tech shootings last April that left 33 people dead, there is a growing movement arguing that students should be allowed to carry guns to protect themselves on campus. One lobby group, Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, was formed to promote second amendment rights (the right to bear arms) on university campuses across the United States.

According to the SCCC, "State laws and school policies stack the odds in favor of armed killers by disarming law abiding citizens licensed to carry concealed handguns virtually everywhere else."

Bryce Eastlick, an SCCC organizer told the *Kansas State Collegian* that by permitting licensed gun owners to carry guns on campus, a shooting might be avoided. "When it takes the average police or security department between five and 15 minutes to respond to an emergency call, it becomes difficult to diffuse a situation in a safe and timely manner," he said.

As for the Virginia Tech shooting, Eastlick says it draws attention to what the SCCC sees as the failure of "gun free zones" and the false sense of security they provide. "It has raised

awareness on many different fronts: the false sense of security that students on campus have, the effectiveness of gun-free zones, as well as the lack of defense that those on college campuses have."

But not everyone agrees. "You don't like the fact that you can't have a gun on your college campus? Drop out of school," Peter Hamm of the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence told Fox news.

Hamm and others skeptical of the SCCC position want to see tighter restrictions on gun licensing, and more thorough background checks. The SCCC also supports such initiatives but doesn't believe it is sufficient.

--MACLEANS.CA Nov. 16, 2007

"The evolution of the fire service"

Firefighters in major cities are being trained to take on a new role as lookouts for terrorism, raising concerns of eroding their standing as trusted American icons and infringing on people's privacy.

Unlike police, firefighters and emergency medical personnel need no warrants to enter homes and businesses, which puts them in position to spot behavior that could indicate terror activity or planning.

Mike German, a former FBI agent who now is national security policy counsel to the American Civil Liberties Union, said the concept is dangerously close to the Bush administration's 2002 proposal to have workers with access to private homes, such as postal carriers and telephone repairmen, report suspicious behavior to the FBI.

The Homeland Security Department is testing a program with the New York City fire department to share intelligence information so firefighters are better prepared when they respond to emergency calls. Homeland Security also trains the New York City fire service how to identify material or behavior that may indicate terrorist activities.

As part of the program, which started last December, Homeland Security gave secret clearances to nine New York City fire chiefs.

Even before the federal program began, New York firefighters and inspectors had been training to recognize materials and behavior the government identifies as "signs of planning and support for terrorism." When going to private residences, for example, they are told to be alert for a person who is hostile, uncooperative or

expressing hate or discontent with the United States; unusual chemicals or other materials that seem out of place; ammunition, firearms or weapons boxes; surveillance equipment; still and video cameras; night-vision goggles; maps, photos, blueprints; police manuals, training manuals, flight manuals; and little or no furniture other than a bed or mattress.

New York City Fire Chief Salvatore Cassano would not discuss specifics, but he said some terror-related information has been passed along to law enforcement since firefighters and officers began the training three years ago. "They've had some hits," Cassano said. "It's working."

Separately, the fire services in Washington, DC, Phoenix and Atlanta also have received terror-related intelligence training.

"It's the evolution of the fire service," said Bob Khan, the fire chief in Phoenix, which has created an information-sharing arrangement between the fire service and law enforcement through terrorism liaison officers.

The Detroit area, which has one of the largest concentrations of Arab-Americans in the country, does not conduct this type of intelligence training, nor does it plan to. "That's a touchy area," said Detroit's deputy fire commissioner, Seth Doyle.

-- AP, November 23, 2007

The Third Wave

Second-wave feminists were ignited by the civil rights issues of their decade [the 1960s], just as first-wave feminists had been motivated by the abolitionist movement and women's suffrage issues of the 19th century.

Just as second-wave feminism changed the universal assumption of male as the norm, third-wave feminism and today's [college and university] women's and gender studies departments are challenging the idea that white, middle-class females are the norm.

-- Kendall Anderson, *Minnesota Women's Press*, Nov. 20, 2007

Ed.: We're betting that when the waves cease a-lappin' the feminist norm will turn out to be an angry brown- or black-skinned unwed socialist bisexual female hailing from somewhere in Africa, Asia, Oceania or the Americas south of the Rio Grande.

Taser Town

A man was tased and arrested near Vernal, Utah after refusing to sign a speeding ticket.

The encounter, captured on the police car camera on September 14th, is the latest in a string of incidents involving the use of Tasers by officers on citizens who are in no way threatening, acting unlawfully or resisting co-operation.

The video shows Utah Highway Patrolman John Gardner pull over Jared Massey, his pregnant wife and baby and ask for Mr. Massey's license.

Mr. Massey tells the officer he does not understand why he has been stopped or what he is being charged with, at which point the officer orders Massey to get out of the car. The officer then puts down his clipboard and immediately takes out his Taser without any provocation whatsoever, yelling "Turn around and put your hands behind your back" as Massey attempts to point out the speed limit sign and engage the officer in conversation.

A shocked Massey asks "what the hell is wrong with you?", turning around as the officer had demanded, at which point the officer unleashes 50,000 volts from the Taser into Massey's body, sending him screaming to the ground and causing his wife to jump out of the car and yell hysterically for help.

Lying face down on the ground a shell shocked, Mr. Massey says "officer I don't know why you are doing what you are doing" to which the officer replies "I am placing you under arrest because you did not obey my instruction."

Mr. Massey then once again asks the officer several times why he was stopped and what he is being charged with. He then asks for his rights to be read and points out that the officer cannot arrest him without doing this. Instead of reading Massey his rights the officer addresses another patrolman who arrives on the scene sardonically commenting "Ohhh he took a ride with the Taser."

Utah Highway Patrol spokesman Cameron Roden admitted that Patrolman John Gardner could have simply written "refuses to sign" on

the citation. -- View video at <http://infowars.net/articles/november2007/211107Tased.htm>

Don't Know Much about History

By Michael Winship

In the December 3, 2001 issue of *Newsweek*, not quite three months after 9/11, Howard Fineman and Martha Brant wrote that President Bush, "has been a model of unblinking, eyes-on-the-prize decisiveness. His basic military strategy ... has proved astute. He has been eloquent in public, commanding in private. He had survived the first blows, made the right calls and exceeded expectations - again."

The commander-in-chief doesn't read much in the way of history books, the article continued. "He's busy making history, but doesn't look back at his own, or the world's.... Bush would rather look forward than backward. It's the way he's built."

Three weeks ago, a front-page, article in the *Washington Post* began, "At the nadir of his presidency, George W. Bush is looking for answers.... What lessons does history have for a president facing the turmoil I'm facing? How will history judge what we've done? These are the questions of a president who has endured the most drastic political collapse in a generation. Not generally known for intellectual curiosity, Bush is seeking out those who are, engaging in a philosophical exploration of the currents of history that have swept up his administration."

One of the books he has admired is Sir Alistair Horne's *A Savage War of Peace*, about France's defeat in the Algerian War for Independence.

As Salon.com's Gary Kamiya wrote, the fact that the Bush administration would gravitate toward Horne's book "is one of the remarkable intellectual ironies in recent years... [It] recounts the inevitable defeat of a colonialist power at the hands of a small but determined group of insurgents who effectively used terrorism to win their nation's freedom."

-- truthout July 24, 2007

The Ninth Amendment

The Ninth Amendment to the Constitution is one of the most wonderful amendments in the entire Bill of Rights. ("The enumeration in this Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the People.") Yet the Ninth Amendment has been utterly ignored by the Supreme Court because, in our opinion, it would directly invalidate the entire structure and philosophy of government as it operates today. As can easily be seen in the language of the Ninth, everything is upside down -- the servant has become master. The few "rights retained by the people" are only those recognized by the court.

* * *

After having successfully taken each member of the community in its powerful grasp, and fashioned him at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community. It covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and most energetic characters cannot penetrate to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrial animals, of which government is shepherd. -- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

* * *

I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of the rights of the people by the gradual & silent encroachments of those in power than by violent & sudden usurpations.-- James Madison, Virginia Convention, 1788

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